

FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to present the twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Data Buoy Co-operation Panel.

We have used the possibilities afforded by the CD-ROM format to include as much documentation as possible on the meeting of the Panel, its action groups and task teams, national reports and the associated science and technical workshop.

The Panel continues to support new initiatives to serve both its immediate needs and those of the wider community. Key amongst those are: workshops, to engage with the users of buoy data and establish their current priorities and future needs, and where appropriate to establish pilot projects; and, training programmes, to engage new countries in the work of the Panel, both by increasing awareness and competence in the use of buoy data, and by fostering collaborative activities and deployment opportunities in critical and data-sparse areas. The first of these, directed at key personnel from the African region, was held at Ostend in June 2007. A successful second capacity building workshop for the Western Indian Ocean took place in Mauritius, from 2 to 6 May 2011. A third in-region workshop for the Western Indian Ocean is planned to be held in Mombassa, Kenya in April 2012. In addition, the Panel is planning to support a regional workshop in Chennai, India, in November 2012.

Pilot projects, to rigorously evaluate new technologies that might ultimately enhance both the research and operational capabilities of data buoys: the first example, the DBCP Iridium Pilot Project, continues to evaluate the global performance of the Iridium satellite system in drifting buoys and will continue to seek opportunities in southern oceans. The evaluation of the Argos 2-way satellite system has now been completed successfully. Other Pilot Projects are continuing: the recovery of two-dimensional wave spectral data from both moored and drifting buoys, and on High Resolution Sea Surface Temperature from drifters to complement satellite data. A new pilot project on the impact of sea level atmospheric observations on Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) was initiated.

Provision of interim technical support to new observing systems as part of a move to a more inclusive JCOMMOPS organization: the first system to benefit from this outreach will be the OceanSITES network of ocean reference platforms, but we hope that others may follow. The Panel's Technical Coordinator is now supporting Ocean SITES. At its recent session in Geneva (September 2011) the Panel affirmed its support for this work to continue these contributions to the global community, and identified the necessary funds.

As regards organizational matters, the Panel welcomed the new Technical Coordinator, Ms Kelly Stroker, appointed in late August 2011, and following Hester Viola's decision to pursue other interests in late 2010. Co-operative arrangements continue with the Argo Technical Coordinator and discussions continue on a sustainable work force for JCOMMOPS.

Overall, I am confident that the Panel is both well placed and enthusiastic to continue its pivotal role in ensuring the smooth flow of observations and other data from the oceans to a wide user community, and in addressing new observational and organizational challenges. We look forward to welcoming participants at DBCP XXVIII in Fremantle in September 2012.

Al Wallace
(*DBCP Chair*)